(Rs. in crores)

As on the last Friday of	Total advances to agriculture	Percentage of total agricultural credit to net bank credit
	(Amount outstanding)	
March 1996	933.76	19.86
March 1997	1098.44	21.06
March 1998	1181.62	19.12
September 1998	1209.87	18.19

Entry Age in Banking Service

1476. SHRIMATI MALTI SHARMA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have also enhanced the maximum entry age(s) in Banking Service including Reserve Bank of India for different categories of staff and officers in view of enhancement of retirement age from 58 to 60 years;

(b) if so, the details thereof for different categories of staff and officers separately; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and by when Government are likely to enhance the entry age(s) for the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M. R. JANARTHANAN): (a) to (c) All the Banking Service Recruitment Boards/Central Recruitment Board and Public Sector Banks/Financial Institutions (including Reserve Bank of India) have been advised on 26th May, 1998 to raise the maximum age for recruitment of officers from 28 years to 30 years and that of clerical cadre from 26 years to 28 years, to be made effective in respect of recruitment processes for which advertisement will be issued after the issuance of Government's advice.

Cheque Bouncing Cases Pending in Courts

1477. SHRI E. BALANANDAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cheque bouncing cases pending in various courts in the country;

(b) the total amounts involved in such cases;

(c) whether such cases affect economic/industrial activity in the country resulting in large scale unemployment when the country is facing tremendous recessions; and

(d) whether Government would consider to enforce stringent laws to stop the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (BANKING, REVENUE AND INSURANCE) (SHRI KADAMBUR M. R. JANARTHANAN): (a) and (b) Such information is not being collected by the Ministry of Finance or the Reserve Bank of India, Furthermore, the effort and time involved in collection and compilation of the desired information from all the courts in the country would be disproportionately high and not commensurate with the results sought to. be achieved.

(c) There is no evidence to show any proximate causal relationship between bouncing of cheques and large scale unemployment. However if a large number of instances of bouncing of cheques takes place, it would have some disruptive effect on trade and commerce.

(d) Chapter XVII was inserted in 1988 in the Negotiable Instruments Act, 1981 to provide for penalties in case of dishonour of cheques for insufficiency of funds in the accounts.